Dear Candidates,

When writing the Declaration of Independence, the men failed to mention the women. Now as women are just starting to taste the success that men have experienced for all of history, there lies an obstacle deeply rooted in misogyny: the wage gap. “Experts” often try to disprove this fact, but even a 13-year-old can sense a problem.

The problem can’t be held down to a catchy slogan such as, “Equal Pay for Equal Work.” The issue is broader than five second-grade spelling words. The issue stems from individuals not understanding what equality truly is. Equality isn’t just receiving the same things; it’s taking into consideration what other people need, and then working to find a way to meet those needs.

According to statistics, women often must choose between a higher paying job with less time for family, or a lower paying job with more time for family. I don’t believe a woman should have to make the choice between providing for her family or spending time with her family. I’ve seen first hand in my own life how the choice can be stressful and, most of the time, overwhelming.

Most influential leaders in history are raised by magnificent women. Don’t you want to see the next generation of leaders just as successful? My advice is to take the politics out of politics. Whenever I read an article online or watch the news, I constantly hear politicians, and yes, even presidential candidates, rattling off confusing solutions. I don’t understand, my mom doesn’t understand, and I doubt the legislators even understand.

Stop trying to please every single person and try to help the people who are actually struggling. Think about Charlotte, a single mom with two kids. It’s almost Christmas and her job is offering extra hours. She could take the opportunity, or she could watch her son play the lead role in the school Christmas pageant. The scenario may seem outlandish, but it’s far too real for too many families in our country.

I suggest making a bill called the Nurturing Children Act. This bill would ensure that mothers and fathers would receive a proportionate ratio of pay to vacation time. This bill would protect all races and ethnicities.

I hope I’ve opened your eyes to another one of the seemingly unimportant struggles Americans have to deal with. If you are elected president, I hope this letter to you will stay in your mind, as well as consider my family in Indiana, or one in Iowa, and even the tired mom in Texas.

I realize the job of president would be a stressful and tiring one. But, you would represent every other American in our nation. With that responsibility, I sincerely hope you remember every single mom who has to choose.

Sincerely,

Jade Thomas